

President's Newsletter

Number 81. January, 1999.

THE YEARS DO FLY BY.

1999 is upon us as we write this, and much is happening with ISASC. Our membership count on this side of the Atlantic is 367; collectors continue to find us and join our ranks; those officers who are new to our goings-on are about to attend our officers/directors meeting in late January; our Atlanta convention plans are well underway; and this year's Benefactor Program is again working to our benefit. All of which gives us a feeling of optimism as we look upon this year as a prelude to the millennium year of 2000 (or, if you prefer, the actual millennium year of 2001). Now, to report on current matters that concern us all.

ATLANTA LOOMS LARGE ON OUR CALENDAR.

For the obvious reason, of course, that it's where many of us will convene this coming May 13-16, to continue the good times that have become a hallmark of our annual conventions. By now you should have received the registration packet giving you a preview of all that's in store for you. It describes our very nice hotel, the Crowne Plaza; the Thursday dinner gala at Pittypat's Porch; the Friday a.m. tour of downtown Atlanta with stopovers at CNN Studios and the World of Coca Cola; "on your own" time to see Atlanta's sights; luncheons at La Grotta; and a program that starts Friday night with our customary get-acquainted gathering, followed by Saturday morning talks on appraising and collectibles insurance by guest experts, the traditional Silent Auction/"Let's Make A Deal" on Saturday afternoon, the festive Saturday night reception and banquet, and on Sunday morning two presentations by two very knowledgeable members introducing us to high-tech ways to photo-catalog our collections and how to use the Internet to expand and upgrade our collections.

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How's that for an agenda! It's all yours plus more, once you decide to give yourself a treat and join us. So do it now, and consider extending your stay prior to and/or after the Thursday to Sunday period. There are tourist attractions in and outside of Atlanta, throughout the state and, if you're driving, on your route, so make the convention a vacation to boot. Let us hear from you soon!

NEW OFFICERS READY FOR NEW YEAR.

As you're aware from 1998 Newsletters, ISASC's officers for 1999 (some new, some renewed) are in place and ready for work. If you'd like to see just who your "elected officials" are, see the revised listing on the inside front cover of the enclosed EQM. To get off on a quick business footing, we're all meeting on Saturday, January 23, at Jerry Wilson's home in Escondido, CA, where Jerry also will show us his new Fulfillment Center. That's the place from which Jerry handles the job of storing, reordering, keeping records, packaging, and shipping of publications, catalogs, back EQMs, etc. Jerry's already got it all set up and functioning smoothly, besides which, as a vice president, he'll be deeply involved with the other officers in dealing with our January business agenda, which we'll report on in the April Newsletter.

ABOUT COIN-OP SCALES.

Several months ago, member Bill Berning sent us an article which appeared in the October 1998 issue of Jukebox Collector, written in 1993 by an associate of his, Dick Bueschel (recently and regretfully deceased). Bueschel was an authority on vintage coin-operated "weighing machines," but, unfortunately, the book he and Berning planned to collaborate on never saw the light of print. However, his article was quite engrossing, so much so that we've reproduced it for inclusion in this mailing.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT.

For sometime now, member Judy Soslau has headed up an "Endowment" Committee which has been looking into the idea of how ISASC could benefit from an Endowment or Gift Program that members, at a certain time in their lives, might see fit to participate in. This could involve bequeathing all or part of their collections to our Society, or alternatively, participating in other ways having nothing to do with scales and/or weights.

After discussing the idea and its numerous ramifications at length, the Committee decided that it needed some input from our members at large in order to help "point the way." As a result, the Committee has prepared the enclosed cover letter and questionnaire, and is asking that each of you give us (your Society) a very few minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire and mail it back to Judy in the enclosed addressed and postage paid envelope. And finally, we're sure each of you will make a conscientious effort to comply, knowing that it's an easy way to acknowledge the Committee's hard work to serve the common good. Now, please do your part, and accept our thanks in advance.

SCALES AND WEIGHTS FOR SALE -- BY MAIL.

Just before concluding this Newsletter, we received an 18-page catalog of an auction-by-mail of weights and scales. It came from Simmons Gallery, 53 Lamb's Conduit Street, London WC1N 3NB, ENGLAND; tel. +44171 831 2080; Fax +44171 831 2090. Items to be offered at mail/auction comprise 380 lots of weights and scales (22 of the latter). According to the catalog, "rather more than we usually offer and possibly the best selection ever." The first part of the sale comprises the McInerney collection of weights, both English and Irish, followed by a good selection of both Antwerp and French weights with some rare Italian and Indian. IMPORTANT. Closing date is Tuesday, February 9, 1999, at 12:00 noon GMT, and bids must be received no later than this date. So, if you'd like a catalog with all lots listed, along with reserve prices; two pages of weights and scales illustrations; and a bid sheet; we suggest you call at once and ask that one be airmailed you.

OUR CONDOLENCES.

Sad to say, this past fall we lost two of our long-standing members, known to many of you. In October, member Bruce Levitt of Yardley, Pennsylvania, passed away, and we join his many friends in expressing our condolences to Gloria, his devoted wife. Gloria has seen fit to continue the ISASC membership in her name, and we welcome her with the hope that she derives the same measure of enjoyment from ISASC that she and Bruce found together in our Society.

Another loss our Society suffered in late October was the passing of Lew Weiss, one of our earliest and most active members. Lew and spouse Ruth, of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, were globe-trotters during the many years they were part of ISASC, and it was our pleasure on many an occasion to carry news of their far-distant adventures in search of scales. Ruth, too, has seen fit to retain ISASC membership in her name, and we hope to see her often, knowing that her zeal for collecting is likely to stay with her forever and a day.

HITHER, THITHER AND YON.

- ** This past December 9th yours truly presented a slide show on Tiffany scales at the Downers Grove (IL) Museum for its Collectors Lunch Hour. The audience, mainly seniors, seemed truly appreciative (most stayed awake, some asked questions). The youngest in attendance were ISASC member Paul Bessey, who stayed to the very end, and Mary Easton, who'd heard the talk before, couldn't stay, and had some unrelated scale questions (see below). All in all, things went quite well.
- ** Now, about Mary Easton, a staunch member who goes scale-hunting in England once or twice a year. It seems she'd recently acquired an attractive Roberval letter scale and wanted its authenticity confirmed. Based on what I've come to know (having collected 567 postal scales), I assured Mary that the scale indubitably was authentic and, actually, quite a beauty. Having thus been satisfied, she then asked if we had any reference material on Detecto Scales that might enable her to better identify one in her collection. As chance would have it, we were able to show her a book published by Detecto commemorating the firm's 50th anniversary in the scale business (1900-1950). This led to some detective work, enabling us to find the current East Coast location of the firm, and Mary vowed to do the follow-up to secure the information she was seeking. Stay tuned and in our next Newsletter we'll spin the final chapter of Mary's far-reaching search.

** We recently heard from member George Anna Wehman and spouse Phil, telling us that cable station HGTV (Home & Garden) will be televising a program on Saturday, January 23, at 1:00 p.m. EST, titled "What's Your Hobby?," and featuring a portion of the Red Meade scale collection. It seems that George Anna and Phil tuned in to the program some time ago, and subsequently learned that it is being rerun. We're somewhat doubtful you will receive this Newsletter in time to watch the program, but if you do, by all means, tune in. And if not, you might call the station in Knoxville, TN at 423/694-2700, or visit it on the Internet -- www.hgtv.com -- to see if another showing is scheduled for the future.

** You may remember our telling you last April about the film makers at Florida State U. who were in the middle of producing a thesis film titled "Slide Rule," for which member Martin Evans provided a number of scales as props integral to the plot. Well, this past August it all came to pass, and impressively so. The film, which both Martin and yours truly viewed on our respective VCR's, ran 23 minutes, 46 seconds, was quite professionally done and entertaining to see, and sure enough, from time to time showed one or another of Martin's scales on camera. On top of which, when the screen credits appeared following the film, ISASC's name, along with Martin's, was boldly displayed. Now that we've had a taste of stardom(?), perhaps we should appoint a committee of Hollywood members to keep ISASC and our hobby in the limelight. Any suggestions along these lines are welcome.

** And before we're distracted, our deep thanks to all those members who have again supported our Benefactor Program in a most generous way. It appears that we'll again reach our quota, and that approximately 80 members again will be responsible for making it happen. In our April Newsletter we'll convey our on-going thanks by including a list of all by name.

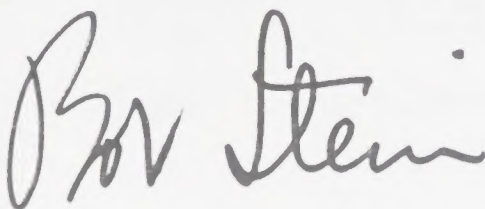
IN THIS MAILING...

you'll find the expected -- and lots of it. EQM, of course, and the President's Newsletter, along with Directory Supplement #3, and the latest library list (with the suggestion you use it to expand your own library). Also, there's the unexpected, like the Soslau questionnaire (we know you'll do what we're asking), and the Jukebox Collector scale article reprint. As you can tell, we're doing our best to inundate you. And speaking of inundate, we hope you used the update form that came with your dues notice. These days more and more of us are surfing the Web and corresponding via e-mail, and if you've got a fax number, a Website and/or an e-mail address, it should go on the update form and be returned to Treasurer Eddy Konowitz along with an updated count of all the scales in your collection.

AS WE ENTER 1999...

its time to express a sentiment that's easy to come by, namely, to thank all the officers, directors, and a too-large-to-count contingent of members for past services rendered, and to thank them in advance for future services they've pledged to provide. Among the movers and shakers are Jerry Katz, Ruth Willard, Eddy Konowitz, Jan Macho, Eric and Judy Soslau, Ben Smith, Steve Ginsberg, Diana Crawforth, Utz and Shirley Schmidt, Norman Cima, Jerry Wilson, Paul Bessey, Tom Dooley, Peter DiCristofaro, Ted and Jean Stein, and from Canada -- Bob Traquair, Ed Walton, Harvey Kotler, Joe Stroz, and Bianca Gendreau. And to all our members go a similar heartfelt expression of thanks and gratitude for all the support we've received from every one of you. On that thought, we'll say goodbye for the nonce, wishing you the happiest of new years.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ted Stein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "S".